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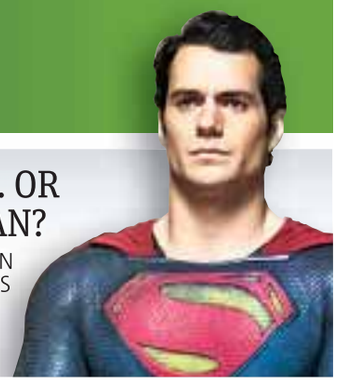
After the ice storm comes the cleanup

Xmas lights are still dim in parts of Eastern Canada, with power slow to return for many despite hydro crews' efforts PAGE 5

SUPERMAN ... OR MEDIOCREMAN?



NOT ALL WAS GOLD ON THE SILVER SCREEN THIS YEAR. A ROUNDUP OF MOVIES DEEMED THE WORST OF 2013 PAGE 9

HERE COMES SANTA CLAUS

Jolly Ol' St. Nick is greeted with rock-star like adoration by a throng of fans.

For one Regina family, Christmas came early this year after city police united for a gesture of generosity after their presents were stolen. Story, page 3.

IAN WILLMS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

No Metro on Wednesday

Metro is not publishing on Christmas Day, but look for our special Boxing Day edition on the 26th

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Police make spirits bright after thief swipes presents

Holiday charity.
Officers raise money for family that lost gifts in break-in

The grinch stole a family's Christmas by pilfering presents from a northwest Regina home, but city police have helped to bring it back.

On Saturday afternoon, police responded to a break-and-enter on the 7200 block of Bennett Drive. Finding that several Christmas presents and a piggy bank had been stolen from the home, an officer decided to pass a hat among members of the force for the victims.

"The constable collected donations of $415, a snow globe and 10 pounds of chocolates from members who were working," Leslie Parker, a police communications officer, said on Monday.

Officers on a later shift and members of the communications department also made donations for gifts to replace those that had been taken from the three kids in the family.

Many Regina residents, using social media, have praised the officers' generosity. According to Parker, though, deeds like this are common in the police service.

"This is actually not rare," he said. "Officers usually deliver holiday hampers to the less fortunate and do small things like give those in need coffee cards."

Once, Parker noted, a Regina officer got members of his church to knit scarves and mitts for sex-trade workers.

The only difference with this police act of charity, he said, is that a superintendent tweeted about it.

"This is the first time it was tweeted out and the public was informed," Parker said.

"Members are much more dedicated to giving to the less fortunate than they are to being in the spotlight."

Police continue to investigate the break-in, said Staff Sgt. Darrell Mosiondz.

According to Mosiondz, it was the first robbery involving Christmas gifts that Regina police had been called about this season.

"So far this year we've been pretty lucky," Mosiondz said.

"The weather's been really cold so it has prevented this kind of thing.

"We were just really glad to help."

SARAH TAGUIAM/METRO

The kindness shown by Regina officers following a break-in is common at the police service, says communications officer Leslie Parker. Police donated money to replace a family's Christmas presents that had been stolen.
SARAH TAGUIAM/METRO

After tumult of 2013, mayor looks ahead

Mayor Michael Fougere METRO

After a busy 2013 that saw a rare municipal referendum and what he calls a "historic" annexation agreement with the encircling Rural Municipality of Sherwood, Mayor Michael Fougere is looking forward to another exciting year.

"The first item of business is, of course, our 2014 budget," Fougere told Metro.

"We are in the midst of working on it and will conclude that in the first month or so."

In addition to the budget, Fougere cited infrastructure renewal and regional economic development as some of the recurring issues that will be top priorities for council.

Last month, council received an administrative report claiming that the cost of Regina's street repairs will explode to $523 million by 2033 if the city doesn't increase its annual $15-million investment in roads.

Among the most tumultuous issues this past year at city hall was the conflict over financing a more than $220-million wastewater treatment plant — a lengthy argument that went to a September referendum before it was settled in favour of a public-private partnership.

The city also hosted a two-day planning summit in November to explore the "economic case" for increased regional co-operation, before formally signing an agreement to absorb land from Sherwood.

"We will spend much of our time consolidating the new lands within the city limits and building for the future," Fougere said.

In 2014 the city will host the North American Indigenous Games, which the mayor calls a "huge celebration and competition" that will draw about 6,000 athletes to the Queen City.

MARCO VIGLIOTTI/METRO

Maidstone

Mountie accused of inappropriate behaviour

A western Saskatchewan RCMP commander has been removed from duty after senior management received reports of his alleged inappropriate workplace behaviour.

On Dec. 5, a sergeant with more than 20 years of service was removed from his command at the Mounties' detachment in Maidstone.

"The RCMP takes these types of situations very seriously, which is why the member was removed from the workplace and an internal code-of-conduct investigation ordered," the force stated in a press release on Monday.

The commander is alleged to have violated the RCMP's code of conduct and informal disciplinary action is sufficient, according to the release.

A hearing will be initiated if disciplinary measures are warranted.

The RCMP will not release the commander's name unless he undergoes statutory charges.

METRO

Fatality

Man killed in snowmobile crash

A man is dead after a snowmobile hit a ditch in rural Saskatchewan this past weekend.

On Saturday at about 11 p.m., four snowmobilers were travelling across a farm 19 kilometres southwest of Hanley, just south of Saskatoon, when they hit an unseen ditch, RCMP said.

One of the snowmobile drivers, a 49-year-old from Strongfield, suffered severe chest injuries. The man was dead when paramedics arrived.

The coroner's office has ordered an autopsy while RCMP in Saskatoon continue to investigate the incident.

METRO

Chadian forces wound at least two in drive-by

Young men react after their friend was badly injured by passing Chadian troops during a protest outside M'Poko Airport in Bangui, Central African Republic, on Monday. Hundreds of demonstrators gathered to protest Chadian forces and express support for French troops and other regional African forces. At least two people were wounded as pickups of Chadian soldiers sped through the crowd firing off several rounds. REBECCA BLACKWELL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nigeria's president responds to allegations

Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan is challenging a prominent critic to prove allegations of corruption and that he is training a death squad to kill enemies.

President Goodluck Jonathan, in a letter posted on his special adviser's website Monday, did not address charges that he is shielding a party financier indicted for drug trafficking in the United States and that drug barons are influencing politicians.

Jonathan said he has asked security agencies and the government-funded National Commission for Human Rights to investigate ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo's suggestion that he is training a squad to assassinate some of the more than 1,000 alleged enemies on a hit list.

Jonathan's letter responds to criminal and treasonous allegations made by Obasanjo, his former mentor. It is the most comprehensive accounting of his government ever provided by Jonathan, who has governed since the end of 2009, yet still sidesteps difficult questions.

Nigeria's leader barely touched on the issue of the indicted Buruji Kashamu, saying the man had already responded himself. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

France

Train carrying nuclear waste derails

French authorities say a train carrying nuclear waste has derailed in a Paris suburb, but no leaks, injuries or other problems have been reported.

An official with the national fire service says experts carried out radiological tests after the incident Monday in Drancy, and found no leaks. The official said the train went about 50 centimetres off the rails. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brazil

Floods, mudslides kill at least 20

Civil defence officials say floods and mudslides caused by heavy downpours have killed at least 20 people and forced more than 40,000 to leave their homes in Brazil.

The civil defence department of Minas Gerais state said Monday that 14 people died there in floodwaters or mudslides. The civil defence department in Espirito Santo state says another six people were killed there and about 40,150 people were forced from their homes. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indonesia

Official closes airport after he's denied boarding

The Indonesian government has warned a district chief after he forced an eastern airport to close temporarily because he failed to get a ticket on a fully booked flight, officials said Monday.

Marianus Sae, chief of Ngada district in East Nusatenggara province, ordered dozens of city security officers to block the runway of Turarelo airport on Flores island on Saturday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pussy Riot is free, but say it's not a victory

'This is a hoax and a PR move.' Band members say their release is a 'cosmetic measure,' call for ban on Olympics

Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, the third member of Russian punk bank Pussy Riot to be released from custody following an amnesty law passed by parliament, leaves prison in Krasnoyarsk, Russia, on Monday. TATYANA VISHNEVSKAYA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Two members of the Russian punk band Pussy Riot walked free Monday, criticizing the amnesty measure that released them as a publicity stunt, with one calling for a boycott of the Winter Olympics to protest Russia's human rights record.

Maria Alekhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova were granted amnesty last week in a move largely viewed as the Kremlin's attempt to soothe criticism of Russia's human rights record before the Games in Sochi in February.

"I'm calling for a boycott of the Olympic Games," Tolokonnikova said. "What is happening today — releasing people just a few months before their term expires — is a cosmetic measure."

Another member of the band, Yekaterina Samutsevich, was previously released on a suspended sentence. All three were found guilty of hooliganism motivated by religious hatred and sentenced to two years in prison for a guerrilla performance at Moscow's main cathedral in March 2012.

The band members said their protest was meant to highlight their concern about increasingly close ties between the state and the church.

Russia's parliament passed the amnesty bill last week, allowing the release of thousands of inmates. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reputed Montreal mob boss Rizzuto is dead

Vito Rizzuto, the reputed head of the Montreal Mafia who built a powerful criminal organization with international tentacles, died in hospital Monday.

Rizzuto, 67, passed away of natural causes, said Maude Hebert-Chaput of Montreal's Sacre-Coeur Hospital.

His death raises questions about the future of the Rizzuto clan's decades-old empire, which was crippled by his 2006 extradition to the United States.

Rizzuto was arrested by Canadian authorities in 2004 and extradited two years later to the U.S., where he was convicted for his role in the 1981 murder of three Bonanno crime-family members in New York City.

He was sentenced to 10 years in prison, minus time served while awaiting extradition.

Following his October 2012 release, Rizzuto returned to Canada to a group of family and friends whose ranks had thinned considerably. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vito Rizzuto
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Hydro crews work around the clock to get lights on

Ice storm. Hundreds of thousands in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick may still be without power on Christmas Day

A nasty ice storm that left hundreds of thousands without power in Ontario and Quebec tracked through the Maritimes on Monday as authorities worked frantically to clear tree-strewn roadways, restore downed hydro lines and get stranded travellers to their destinations.

Hydro companies in the Greater Toronto Area — which appeared to be the hardest hit by the weather system — warned some residents to brace for the possibility of being without power until Boxing Day or later.

Some neighbourhoods resembled crime scenes with yellow police tape used to cordon off areas where electric wires or large trees had come crashing down over the weekend. Sidewalks around some high rise buildings were also closed off due to the risk of falling ice.

Meanwhile, travellers trying to get home for the holidays continued to face delays and cancellations on airlines and trains.

Environment Canada said the storm had hit Eastern Canada hard.

"It was a mighty blow," senior climatologist David Phillips told The Canadian Press. "It came at a really difficult time for people travelling and doing last-minute shopping.''

A crew subcontracted to assist with restoring power following the ice storm in Toronto works on a power line on Monday. MATTHEW SHERWOOD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The weather agency said the system had turned particularly vicious thanks to a combination of warm air from Texas colliding with cold air over Canada to create a drawn-out period of freezing rain.

"We had freezing rain from south of London, all the way through to Ottawa and Montreal and southern Quebec and now today to central and southern New Brunswick, all of P.E.I. and most of Nova Scotia," said Phillips.

"The geographical reach of this nasty, nasty storm is really affecting millions of Canadians in Eastern Canada."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Recovery efforts

'Winning the war'

"The prudent thing now is to plan for the worst and hope for the best," said Toronto Hydro CEO Anthony Haines, whose utility had some 215,000 customers without power Monday afternoon, down from more than 300,000 at the peak of the outage.

Haines said there were some communities where crews hadn't been able to get into yet as they triaged the power outage situation, prioritizing hospitals, water treatment plants and "feeders," which serve thousands of customers.

He did suggest, however, that recovery efforts appeared to be turning a corner.

"I feel that we're now winning the war, we're able to restore more than is breaking behind us."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sparrows sit on ice-covered branches in Mississauga, Ont., on Monday. J.P. MOCZULSKI/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

Power outages

- Though some 215,000 customers in the Greater Toronto Area were still without power, Toronto Mayor Rob Ford insisted Monday that Canada's largest city was not in a state of emergency.
- Elsewhere in Ontario, Power Stream, which serves Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan among other communities, reported 16,300 customers were still down.
- Meanwhile, Hydro One — which serves 1.3 million customers in Ontario communities that include Guelph, Peterborough and Walkerton — said more than 112,000 customers were still without power in smaller towns and rural areas.
- In Quebec, nearly 45,000 customers remained without power, largely in the province's Eastern Townships, as technicians worked to fix electricity lines and other equipment damaged by the storm.
- In New Brunswick, the freezing rain that continued to fall Monday hampered efforts to restore power to thousands of customers in the province's southwest. By mid afternoon, NB Power said more than 21,000 customers were without power. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ammolite. Canadian gem considered a national treasure stolen in heist

Police in Vancouver are looking for a rare gemstone stolen early last Friday morning in a robbery in the city's Gastown district. The front window of Rocks and Gems Canada was smashed Dec. 20 and police say the crook made off with the opal-like gem, ammolite, which is worth $500,000.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ammolite. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Heart health. Canadians 'need to do a lot better' to reduce heart attack risk

Just one in 10 Canadians have ideal cardiovascular health, according to a new study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

Even 50 per cent of children scored poorly in the groundbreaking study, which shows that the majority of the population needs to adopt a healthier lifestyle or risk cardiovascular disease — the second-leading cause of death in the country.

"The main message is that we need to do a lot better in terms of heart health if we want to reduce the incidence of heart attack or stroke occurring in Canada," says senior author Dr. Jack Tu.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Apollo 8. Astronaut relives spacecraft's 1968 Christmas Eve broadcast

An astronaut who was aboard the first manned spacecraft to orbit the moon is marking the mission's 45th anniversary in front of a piece of the actual spacecraft.

Retired Captain James Lovell Jr. re-enacted the Apollo 8's live Christmas Eve broadcast from 1968. During that broadcast, astronauts read verses of Genesis from the Bible.

On Monday, Lovell and several high school students took turns reading in front of an Apollo 8 module that's housed at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry.

Lovell says they chose Genesis because it's central to three religions: Christianity, Judaism and Islam. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market endorses Apple deal with China Mobile

Fighting back. Alliance is tech giant's latest attempt to gain smartphone-market share in world's most populous country

A woman using a phone walks past Apple's logo near its retail outlet in Beijing Monday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Apple's stock rose 3 per cent in morning trading on Monday, a day after the company announced a long-anticipated agreement to bring the iPhone to China Mobile, the world's biggest phone company.

The deal has the potential to boost iPhone sales in a market where Apple Inc. faces intense competition. But even with China Mobile Ltd.'s vast state-owned network, marketing power and more than 750 million mobile accounts, the iPhone has enormous challenges to overcome in the world's most populous nation.

Apple's smartphone is already available in China through two smaller carriers, and although it is popular with well-heeled Chinese customers, the iPhone is losing market share to lower-priced smartphones from Samsung and local brands.

The iPhone 5S and 5C will go on sale in Apple and China Mobile stores beginning Friday, Jan. 17. China Mobile customers can register for phones starting Wednesday.

The companies didn't announce pricing or the terms of the agreement.

The deal comes a month before China's Lunar New Year holiday in late January, a big gift-buying season. That "will provide an immediate boost to Apple's share in China," said analyst Nicole Peng of Canalys, a research firm.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Viva Las Vegas turnin' day into Christmastime

Brothers Joaquin, left, and Sebastian visit with the Red Queen during the third-annual Winter in Venice event at the Venetian hotel-casino on the Las Vegas Strip Dec. 5. Las Vegas casinos have begun staging elaborate Christmas events in recent years to attract tourists during the slow winter months. HANNAH DREIER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bordeaux vineyard

Chinese tycoon, son die in aircraft crash in France

A Chinese businessman, his 12-year-old son and two other people died in a helicopter crash as they toured Bordeaux vineyards he had recently purchased, French authorities said Monday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CHRISTMAS BABY

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

I'm going to take a moment to abuse my power as a newspaper columnist and send a very Happy Birthday shout-out to my boyfriend. Yes, my poor significant other has a dreaded Christmas Eve birthday. Even his name — Christopher — echoes the omnipresent holiday that falls on his special day.

Often overlooked and forgotten during the busy holiday season, he has quite a few childhood stories of birthdays spent alone at the ice rink and forced "half-birthday" celebrations in June that always seemed a bit lackluster.

He is not alone in his misery. Many Capricorn babies are quite vocal about their ill-timed birthdates and the dreaded Birthday-Christmas combo gifts. Why is it that a joint gift would be a complete outrage for an individual born in June but it's totally justifiable for anyone afflicted with a December 25th adjacent birthdate?

There are even parenting blogs dedicated to helping couples avoid conceiving a baby with a holiday due date. In case you're wondering, it's best to avoid the bedroom around the end of March if you want to skip a Christmastime delivery.

I am blessed with a mid-August birthday which always meant pool parties with friends and sun-kissed picnics in the park. I recognize how fortunate I am — I have never received a tree ornament as a birthday gift — and as such, I believe that all late December babies are fully entitled to their self-righteous whining. Sulk away Christmas babies! Because regardless of whether or not you choose to celebrate, this eternally merry and bright holiday is impossible to ignore.

Competing with Christmas is not an option and so yuletide birthdays will inevitably become an afterthought. Birthday gifts are wrapped in snowman-print paper, tinsel garlands adorn the hallways instead of balloons and banners, and an abundance of gingerbread cookies and candy canes are placed around the house so that requesting an actual birthday cake seems out of the question.

Worse still is the absence of people willing and available to celebrate your special day. Absentee friends are out of town or suffering from holiday party fatigue. Even those high school acquaintances you never speak to are too distracted to remember to leave an obligatory 'Happy Birthday' Facebook wall post.

Of course there are some perks: Everyone is already in a celebratory mood, you'll probably have the day off work or school, and you'll be surrounded by all of your family (this may or may not be a good thing). If you're very lucky, perhaps some sympathetic friends and family will try to overcompensate with some extra special attention.

But perhaps we can all take a little time this holiday season to do our part to make the neglected birthday boys and girls feel extra special. And please, no combo gifts.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

Photog captures icy bear stare

COURTESY PAUL SOUDERS/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTO CONTEST

Polar bear pic wins top award

An eerie picture of a polar bear lurking beneath melting sea ice has won the grand prize of the 2013 National Geographic Photo Contest.

Seattle-based photographer Paul Souders captured this striking image last year in Hudson Bay, as the setting midnight sun glowed red from the smoke of distant fires. METRO

Q and A

'Hasn't been done before'

PAUL SOUDERS
Wildlife and travel photographer, 52, based in Seattle, Wash.

How did this photograph come about?
In July last year, I travelled to Churchill, Man., and in my inflatable zodiac boat I found one bear. She swam up to an iceberg, ducked under and stayed underwater for several seconds. She hung there, just below the surface, watching me, then came up for another breath before swimming away.

The polar bear looks pensive yet menacing. How does she seem to you?
It's so spooky, knowing that the bear was peering back at me, so watchful and curious. It really feels like a moment of communion and trust for me.

Why do you think it caught the judges' eyes?
It's pretty tough to create a picture that hasn't been done before, and I think maybe this is one of them.

Clickbait

LUKE SIMCOE
Metro Online

ISTOCKIMAGES

Maybe you want to save the environment. Maybe you just want to save time. Or maybe it's Christmas Eve and you forgot to send your mother a card. No matter your reason, Metro has you covered with a few ways to use social media as a substitute for a holiday card.

Facebook:
The world's most popular social media site is actually pretty full-featured when it comes to disseminating holiday cheer. You can craft a simple status update, tag your friends and family in a post, or upload and share a Christmas-themed photo album.

Instaquote:
Available for both iOS and Android, this simple app lets you superimpose text onto Instagram shots. Grandma is sure to love a selfie captioned with "Season's Greetings!"

Touchnote.com:
If you just can't go without the tactile sensation of a tacky Christmas card, consider Touchnote. The site lets you make a card using their online editor and then actually mails it for you to. No more licking stamps!

Comments

RE: Nova Scotia Still Bucking Boxing Day Trend By Keeping Stores Closed On Dec. 26, published online Dec. 23

A government shouldn't even have any say on when a business can open or not. We live in a free country.
Mythos88 posted to metronews.ca

Good for N.S. and let's keep it up. Retail workers already get so few real holiday days (because most so called 'holidays' only benefit students/teachers and certain government workers) to spend with their families, now heaven forbid greedy people might have to, gasp, wait two days to buy their Boxing Day sales items!
Jillian posted to metronews.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: reginaletters@metronews.ca

metro

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Bruce Willis wallops the legacy of John McClane for a quick paycheque in A Good Way to Die Hard. CONTRIBUTED

Comedy

Grudge Match

Director. Peter Segal

Stars. Robert De Niro

Rocky or Raging Bull, who would prevail in a boxing match? That's the question asked in Grudge Match. Robert De Niro and Sylvester Stallone star as retired Pittsburgh boxers who get the chance to step back in the ring to settle a three decade old grudge and make "Kardashian sex tape" kind of money. This is a new story, occasionally funny and touching, but with lots of elements borrowed from other classic movies. **RICHARD CROUSE**

Biography/Comedy

The Wolf of Wall Street

Director. Martin Scorsese

Stars. Leonardo DiCaprio

Set during Wall Street's cocaine and hookers era, The Wolf of Wall Street is based on real life brokers Jordan Belfort (Leonard DiCaprio) and Donnie Azoff (Jonah Hill), who snorted and scammed their way to the top, only to become the subject of an FBI investigation into financial corruption. With its fourth wall breaking narration, scandalous set pieces and absurd antics this is a wild cinematic experience. At three hours it's almost as excessive as Balfort's $26,000 dinners.
RICHARD CROUSE

Biography/Drama

Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom

Director. Justin Chadwick

Stars. Idris Elba, Naomie Harris

Nelson Mandela's life is so astonishing even Hollywood cannot seem to bring its incredulity to life. Based on his autobiography, Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom attempts to cram the subject's lifetime battle against apartheid into 139 minutes and the result only dilutes the measure of the late South African President's story. It winds up more encyclopedic than epic.
STEVE GOW

The worst of film in 2013

Forgettable fare.
In a year of great films, there were still plenty of stinkers

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Yesterday we looked at some of the best films of 2013. Today, to balance out that bright note, we look at some of the dark spots of 2014.

Man of Steel

While there may have been many technically worse films this year, Zack Snyder's bombastic, tone-deaf update on Superman fails on a spectacularly higher level. Consider it a weighted grade. Moralizing, wanton destruction and clumsy product placement are a tough mix.

A Good Way to Die Hard

Bruce Willis further tarnishes the legacy of John McClane with this loud and unfun entry that's a Die Hard film in name only. Maybe he's squinting the whole time because he can't bear to look at what he's creating.

Safe Haven

Romance-loving audiences deserve better than this poorly executed dreck from the mind of bestseller Nicholas Sparks. From the wooden acting to the contrived plot to the limping pacing, this would've seemed bad as a Lifetime movie.

Free Birds

Kids' movies generally get more of a pass critically, but some things we can't let slide. Children deserve better than this odd, clumsy tale of turkeys stealing a time machine to change the menu at the first Thanksgiving.

The Last Stand

The kitschy 1980s action tropes that made Arnold Schwarzenegger a star just don't work anymore, as the former California governor painfully learned when no one showed up to see his first starring vehicle since returning to acting. Bizarre character actor Peter Stormare attempting a Texas accent almost makes it worth enduring. Almost.

The Host

There's a certain amount of satisfaction to be taken in watching Twilight guru Stephenie Meyer's attempt at a follow-up franchise crash and burn, but it's a shame it had to involve the lovely Saoirse Ronan. Still, she should come out of this fine.

Delivery Man

Listen, if Vince Vaughn isn't going to bother showing up for his films anymore, why should we? Paying to watch a haggard movie star sleepwalk through scenes doesn't sound like very much fun.

Stand Up Guys

Al Pacino and Christopher Walken as aging wiseguys felt like a throwback itself in all the wrong ways. And in a year dispiritingly full of signs of creeping chauvinism and misogyny, this was one of the worst offenders.

Romeo and Juliet

Julian Fellowes' take on Shakespeare's classic teens at least gave audiences a new appreciation for Baz Luhrmann.

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Holidays in Hollywood

Looks like Duck Dynasty won't be without a home

PAT HEALY
Metro World News

Aw, here's a heartwarming story just in time for the holidays. Thanks to Hunt Channel — a Christian television network that markets almost exclusively in reality shows about Bible-lovin', gun-totin' folks who kill defenseless creatures for sport — Duck Dynasty will not go homeless if A&E decides to drop it on its redneck butt.

A lot of people are calling for the network to pull the plug on Duck Dynasty — surprisingly one of the highest-rated reality shows of all time (proof, I think, of the rapid decline of our intelligence as a society thanks to the Internet and sexting and global warming or whatever) — after patriarch in charge Phil Robertson's recent eloquent musings on homosexuality. And, apparently, the other Duck Dynasty cast members are among those calling for the show to be yanked.

Robertson's brood of fellow people who like to make the duckies go bye-bye with the boom boom stick have his back, and have recently gone on record saying that they don't want to do the show without him.

Fortunately, the Hunt Channel is making it their business to ensure that they won't have to. A Christmas miracle!

According to a TMZ report, Hunt channel owner Merrill Sport thinks that A&E should "put on their big boy pants" and support the cast of Duck Dynasty for being the unapologetic bigots they are. Further, Sport is more than happy to put on his own pair of big kid trousers and air the show himself. Because, at Hunt Channel, he says, "we don't censor our personalities."

Meaning, I guess, Hunt Channel lets their people spit as much hateful bile as they want. First Amendment and whatnot. Give them liberty or give them death! (Give them either, I could care less. But first, maybe, give them some teeth and a world view that isn't rooted in ancient mythology or idiocy.)

Miley beckons us into her boudoir, but do we really want to be there?

Have you guys seen this clip that's going around from Miley's new music video for her song Adore You?

If you haven't, because, I guess, you don't have a google alert set up for "Miley Cyrus" like I do, here's the relevant info:

It features grainy, sex tape-esque footage of Miley, er, pleasuring herself.

I guess we now have the answer to the age-old question "where does one in eternal pursuit of shock value and press go, after humping a foam finger while practically naked onstage?"

But, OK, I don't hate this. Miley Cyrus is a next-level entertainer and whoever is handling her PR right now deserves a big, fat holiday bonus. MyCy (I'm still totally going with this, and don't understand why nobody else has picked this up) was the most-googled person of the year, which is pretty damn impressive considering where she started.

Also, I'm sure there's an opportunity for a think piece on female empowerment and sexual freedom, etc, etc here. I'm not going to write it, I'm just saying there's a window here. **METRO**

Miley Cyrus

Twitter

@robdelaney
Just saw a Hasidic man & 2 Asian girls laugh at a dog knocking over a garbage can so don't even act like peace isn't possible guys.

@Brittanysnow
I bet cats really hate the fact that they can't hashtag #yolo

@RebelWilson
All this reminds me of when I got kicked out of an 'Open House' Pretty Woman style last weekend coz the broker thought I couldn't afford it

Healthy highs and lows this year

In our look back at 2013: HIV cures, HIV scares and how a pet can save your life

MICHELLE CASTILLO
Metro World News

The next-gen condom couldn't have come sooner. THINKSTOCK

LOW: U.S. porn industry shuts down three times due to HIV scare

Debbie didn't do many people this year. Numerous HIV-positive test results in the U.S. porn industry forced a moratorium on production while all potentially infected performers were re-tested for the virus. Current regulations require porn stars to be tested every 14 days in the U.S., limiting the number of people who could be exposed. Still, this year's scares lead many to call for the use of condoms on set, which has led to much debate.

HIGH: The next-generation condom

No glove, no love may be the motto but many men, particularly in developing countries, remain adverse to the prophylactics. To encourage use, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation offered $100,000 to anyone that could come up with the next evolution of the male condom, with up to $1 million for additional research. Eleven ideas won the first-round funding, including a condom made out of bovine tendons or fish skin and a couple versions made out of a crystallized form of carbon called graphene that can conduct heat.

HIGH: Baby "cured" of HIV

While a cure for HIV and AIDS still remains elusive, doctors in Mississippi claimed to have eradicated the HIV virus from a baby by giving her a three-drug regiment within 30 hours of her birth. The mother of the child had not received any pre-natal treatment to prevent transmission, and a blood test had determined that the child was HIV positive at the time of birth. The child, who was two and a half years old at the time of the March announcement, no longer has any traces of the HIV virus in her blood.

HIGH: Face transplants

The practice of transplanting another person's face onto a patient has been around for a few years — and not just on Nip/Tuck.

This year, however, marked many improvements in the field.

Polish doctors claimed to complete the world's fastest face transplant — a 27-hour procedure just three weeks after the patient's accident.

Meanwhile, several patients in the U.S. who received facial transplants in 2012 were shown to have improved blood flow, more blood vessel pathways and improved facial sensation just one year later.

LOW: Emergency birth control doesn't work ... sometimes

European pharmaceutical regulators approved a warning label change that would alert users of Norlevo (levonorgestrel) that it loses potency for women over 165 pounds and does not work in women over 176 pounds. The morning-after pill is a form of emergency birth control that was supposed to prevent pregnancy within 72 hours after having unprotected sexual intercourse. However, with the weight limits, it seems many women may not be able to use it.

HIGH: A big year for ART

Across the world, more than 5 million screaming bundles of joy are born to people who may otherwise never have the experience of having a child without fertility treatments. The International Committee for the Monitoring of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ICMART), who announced the landmark number in October, noted that the first ART baby was born in 1978 using in vitro fertilization. However, more than half of the 5 million ART babies have been born in just the last six years, meaning the technology is improving.

HIGH: Get a pet, save your life

If you need another reason to convince yourself to get a pet, the American Heart Association confirmed what was once an old wives' tale: that having a pet was linked to lower heart disease, lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol levels and lower levels of obesity. Owning a dog was particularly shown to lower cardiovascular risk, maybe because dogs force you to get off your couch and walk them.

LOW: Heroin-like drug spreads overseas

For years, Russia has battled a problem with krokodil or desomorphine, an opioid drug in the same family as heroin and oxycodone. It is more potent than morphine, and is easily made with codeine, paint thinner, gasoline and other over-the-counter products. It also is so toxic that it causes flesh to rot off the user's bones, and the average abuser dies two to three years after beginning to use. Now, evidence shows the drug is spreading across the world, with the first cases reported in the U.S. in September.

Lean pork tenderloin gets a flavour boost from prosciutto, mushrooms and fresh herbs

My choice for an elegant holiday dinner? It's hard to beat a roast, and more often than not my pick is a lean and moist pork tenderloin.

But let's face it, as much as we want to be healthy, there is such a thing as roast that is too lean. A lack of fat often means a lack of flavour. So how to make up this deficit? With plenty of high-flavour ingredients such as prosciutto, fresh herbs, mushrooms and wine.

Prosciutto packs a ton of flavour, and the slight amount of fat it adds is well worth it. As for the herbs, I took a tip from the Italians, who often top off a grilled steak with fresh herbs and a drizzle of olive oil.

Double Pork Roast with Mushroom Marsala Sauce

This recipe serves six. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

- 2 pork tenderloin roasts (3/4 to 1 lb each), trimmed of all fat
- 2 tbsp packed fresh rosemary leaves, chopped
- 2 tbsp packed fresh thyme leaves, chopped
- 4 oz thinly sliced prosciutto
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup finely chopped shallots or onion
- 1/2 lb mushrooms (cremini, white button, shiitake, oyster or a mix), trimmed and sliced
- 1/2 cup dry Marsala wine
- 1 1/4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tbsp all-purpose flour

1. Heat the oven to 350 F. Cut down through each tenderloin lengthwise so that you can open it up like a book, but do not cut all the way through. Sprinkle water on the cutting board under the tenderloin and sprinkle a little water on top of the tenderloin (this will help prevent the meat from tearing when you pound it). Cover the tenderloin with plastic wrap and pound the meat using a meat mallet or rolling pin until it is about 1/2-inch thick.

2. Sprinkle half the rosemary and thyme leaves all over the inside of each butterflied and pounded pork tenderloin and spread the prosciutto evenly in one layer over the herbs. Beginning with the long end, roll up the tenderloin tightly, tucking in the ends (as you would a burrito). Use kitchen twine to tie the roll in a bundle, tying it every 2 inches.

3. In a large nonstick skillet over medium-high, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil. Season the pork lightly on all sides with salt and pepper, then add it to the skillet. Sear until golden brown on all sides. Transfer the pork to a shallow baking pan, then roast on the oven's middle shelf until the centre reaches 145 F, about 20 to 25 minutes. Remove the pork from the oven and cover loosely with foil.

4. Meanwhile, make the sauce. Return the skillet to medium heat. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil and the shallots and cook, stirring, until the shallots are golden. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring often, until the mushrooms give off all their liquid and are lightly browned.

5. Add the Marsala and simmer until almost all of it is reduced. Add 1 cup of the chicken broth and bring back to a boil. In a small bowl whisk the remaining 1/4 cup of chicken broth with the flour. Add the flour mixture to the skillet in a stream while whisking and simmer for 2 minutes. Add any juices that have accumulated from the resting pork to the sauce.

6. Slice the pork crosswise into 1-inch-thick slices. Transfer several slices to each of 6 serving plates. Spoon some of the mushroom sauce over each serving.

SARA MOULTON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dinner. 5-Grain Pilaf with Balsamic Mushrooms

This recipe serves six. PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

Ingredients

- 1 pkg (250 g) PC 5-Grain Blend
- 1 pkg (227 g) white button mushrooms
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup (250 ml) sliced shallots
- ½ cup (125 ml) finely diced carrots
- 1 large clove garlic, thinly sliced
- ½ cup (125 ml) chicken broth
- 1 tsp (5 ml) salt
- ½ tsp (2 ml) freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup (125 ml) grated Parmigiano Reggiano
- ¼ cup (50 ml) chopped fresh parsley

1. Preheat oven to 425 F. Line rimmed baking sheet with foil. In saucepan, bring 8 cups (2 l) water to a boil. Add 5-grain blend. Return to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-high and cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Drain and set aside.

2. On prepared baking sheet, toss mushrooms with 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of the oil. Roast in centre of oven for 20 minutes. Toss with 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of the balsamic vinegar; return to oven and roast another 5 minutes. Set aside.

3. In large nonstick frying pan, heat remaining 2 tablespoons (25 ml) oil over medium-low heat; cook shallots, carrots and garlic for 4 to 6 minutes or until softened. Stir in drained 5-grain blend. Increase heat to high; cook for 5 minutes, stirring. Stir in chicken broth; cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat.

4. Stir in salt, pepper and remaining 1 teaspoon (5 ml) balsamic vinegar. Stir in mushrooms, cheese and parsley.

PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

Pot roast that's fit for a feast

Holiday Pot Roast with Spiced Root Vegetables

This recipe serves 12. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

Roast

- 2 medium red onions, quartered
- 2 medium carrots, cut into pieces
- 3 stalks celery, cut into pieces
- 2 leeks, trimmed and sliced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 6- to 7-pound chuck roast
- Salt and ground black pepper
- 3 cups red wine
- 2 cups unsalted beef stock
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary

Root vegetables

- 6 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 parsnips, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 medium red onions, cut into wedges
- 2 small celeriac roots, peeled and diced
- 2 lbs sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1/2 tsp fennel seeds

1. Heat the oven to 350 F. In a food processor, combine the red onions, carrots, celery and leeks. Pulse until finely chopped, but not so finely that a paste is formed.

2. In a large Dutch oven or heavy bottomed large pot over medium, heat the olive oil. Add the onion-carrot mixture and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Spoon the mixture out into a bowl.

3. Trim the chuck roast of any very large pieces of fat. Season the meat liberally with salt and black pepper. Increase the heat under the Dutch oven to high and add the meat. Sear on all sides until well browned, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer the roast to a plate.

4. Add a bit of the red wine to the pot and scrape up any browned bits on the bottom. Return the browned vegetable mixture to the pot along with the rest of the red wine, beef stock, tomato paste, mustard, bay leaves, and rosemary. Stir well. Carefully return the roast to the pot, cover and place in the oven for 3 to 4 hours, or until very tender.

5. Meanwhile, prepare the roasted vegetables. In a large bowl, toss together the carrots, parsnips, onions, sunchokes and sweet potatoes. Drizzle with olive oil and toss to coat.

6. In a small bowl, mix together the salt, black pepper, cumin, coriander and fennel seed. Sprinkle over the vegetables and toss again. Spread onto a rimmed baking sheet. After the chuck has been roasting for 2 1/2 hours, add the vegetables to the oven. Roast, stirring occasionally, for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until browned and tender.

7. When the chuck is finished cooking, remove the pot from the oven and transfer the roast to a plate. Cover with foil. Remove the rosemary and bay leaves from the pot and discard. Transfer the remaining contents to a blender and blend until smooth, making sure to use caution when blending the hot liquid. Return to the pot and bring to a boil. Simmer until reduced to about 5 cups, or gravy thickness. Serve with the roast and root vegetables.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Five steps to becoming a millionaire

Entrepreneurship. Kim Kaupe describes how to go it alone, even if you don't have start-up cash or a business background

Quoted

"If you have an idea, tell everyone you can. You never know who that person might know."

Kim Kaupe, co-founder of ZinePak

EMILY LAURENCE
Metro World News

Three years ago, 28-year-old Kim Kaupe quit her job to pursue a business idea she brainstormed with her co-founder. Now, she's the head of multi-million dollar company ZinePak. Like many people who have a gem of an idea, Kaupe didn't have a business background or any start-up money. Still, she went for it. Kaupe shares her tips with us so you can pursue your own great idea.

1. Find a hole in the marketplace

"I worked at Brides magazine for two years and then got a job at an ad agency. One of my co-workers at the agency used to work at Sony Records. We hatched this idea of putting magazines and music together, and out came ZinePak. We wanted to create special packages for fans. It was something that didn't exist before."

2. Partner with someone who has the strengths you lack

"My business partner and I fit together perfectly because one of us has the strengths that the other person doesn't. Find someone you gel with and shares your views, but also brings a unique perspective."

3. Tell everyone your idea

"There's this common misconception that when you come up with a great idea, you have to keep it to yourself because someone will steal it. It's really the opposite. If you have an idea, tell everyone you can. You never know who that person might know. Or, they could have a way for you to improve your idea that you haven't thought of. We changed our entire product based on a suggestion a random customer emailed us. It pays to listen — literally."

4. If you're not an expert, find people who are

"Neither my partner nor I had a background in business. Going to meet-ups was essential for growing our business. There are meet-ups for everything: small business owner meet-ups, tech meet-ups, entrepreneur meet-ups... When I first started out, I thought I was the only person in the world who faced certain problems. But chances are, most other entrepreneurs that you talk to have wanted to throw their Quickbooks out the window too and might have a great suggestion that can help you. Whatever you need to learn how to do that you can't Google, there's someone out there who can help you."

Kim Kaupe, co-founder of ZinePak, suggests attending small-business meetups and finding ways to keep your overhead low. CONTRIBUTED

5. Keep your overhead low

"The first year, my business partner and I worked from home using only our computers, cellphones and brains. It was just us hustling and cold calling, saying 'Let us make this awesome product for you.' The less supplies you have to buy, the more money you'll make. Think, do you really need a warehouse or paper printing machine? Chances are there's a company out there who it's cheaper to pay than renting space or buying all the materials yourself."

How to eat, drink and stay healthy this holiday

Pace yourself: try to have a glass of water for each glass of alcohol. ISTOCK

Seasonal hazards. Between overindulging and contracting colds, this time of year can take a toll on your vigor

The holidays are a time to burn your candles at both ends, but you have to be careful to not flame out. The pressure created by a combination of social events, family get-togethers, shopping and financial stress can easily weaken or overwhelm your immune system.

Eating

Make sure you neither eat too much, nor too little. Overindulging will not only put on a few extra holiday pounds, but makes you more likely to develop esophageal reflux from a distended stomach at bedtime. This overnight trickle of stomach acid bubbling up into the back of your throat while lying flat in bed can not only cause heartburn but may also lead to a sore throat or dry cough.

This is not only a nuisance that is often mistaken for an upper respiratory infection (common cold), but may actually increase your odds of getting a sinus infection or bronchitis by decreasing your resistance. Eating too little may make you more likely to get intoxicated, as the alcohol in a glass of holiday cheer is absorbed much more quickly from an empty stomach.

Drinking

With so many social obligations and reasons to celebrate, there is ample opportunity to drink alcohol on a daily basis — and lots of it. "Everything in moderation" should be your motto. Try to drink a glass of water with each alcoholic beverage (one for one). No matter your sex, weight or choice of adult beverage, if you have two or more drinks in under two hours, you will likely be impaired.

Don't drink and drive, and don't let your friends drink and drive. Work out a designated driver in advance with friends, take a taxi or public transportation and don't be afraid to ask if you can sleep over at your host's or friend's home if driving under the influence is your only other option. Drinking coffee will not sober you up.

Being healthy

The 2013-14 influenza season has officially arrived in North America and there are any variety of cold viruses around that have been making people miserable with sore throats, nasal congestion and coughs.

Shaking hands, kissing under the mistletoe and travelling on a plane can all spread illness rapidly. Get a flu shot, wash your hands frequently, keep your hands away from your face and blow kisses where you can. METRO

Hayley Wickenheiser signs autographs following the naming of the team that will compete in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia, during a news conference in Calgary, Monday. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Less experience, more depth: Wickenheiser

Sochi 2014. National Olympic team roster finalized after coaching shakeup, player cuts

Canada's Olympic women's hockey team has less experience than two previous editions, but believes it has the speed and skill to defend the gold medal in Sochi, Russia.

The 21-player roster that will attempt to win a fourth consecutive Olympic gold in women's hockey was finalized Monday after the release of three players.

The 2014 squad includes a dozen players who beat the U.S. women 2-0 in the 2010 final in Vancouver. The 2010 and 2006 squads each carried over 14 players from the previous Winter Games.

The team

- **Goaltenders.** Shannon Szabados, Alta.; Genevieve Lacasse, Ont.; Charline Labonte, Que.
- **Defenceman.** Jocelyne Larocque, Man.; Lauriane Rougeau, Que.; Laura Fortino, Ont.; Meaghan Mikkelson, Alta.; Catherine Ward, Que.; Tara Watchorn, Ont.
- **Forwards.** Meghan Agosta-Marciano, Ont.; Rebecca Johnston, Ont.; Jennifer Wakefield, Ont.; Gillian Apps, Ont.; Caroline Ouellette, Que.; Melodie Daoust, Que.; Jayna Hefford, Ont.; Brianne Jenner, Ont.; Haley Irwin, Ont.; Hayley Wickenheiser, Sask.; Natalie Spooner, Ont.; Marie-Philip Poulin, Que.

"We're a little bit younger in the experience department," admitted forward Hayley Wickenheiser.

"We're very similar in the type of style we're going to play — a tight forechecking style and trying to counteract with a lot of speed. We have a little bit more offensive depth on the back end than in 2010 so we'll be counting on them to jump into the attack.

"Goaltending is as good or better. Maybe a little bit more depth overall."

Canada opens their gold-medal defence Feb. 8 against Switzerland. The final is Feb. 20 at the Bolshoy Ice Dome.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Broncos' Miller bucked back out of the lineup

The Denver Broncos began the season without strong-side linebacker Von Miller, and they'll end it without him, too.

Miller is done for the year after tests Monday revealed a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee, which he injured in the first quarter of Denver's 37-13 win at Houston over the weekend.

The Broncos (12-3) have hit so many potholes this season it's a wonder they're not broken down on the side of the Super Bowl Expressway.

Instead, they can wrap up the AFC's top seed with a win at Oakland (4-11) on Sunday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World juniors

Drouin, Horvat, McDavid help Canada top Swiss

Jonathan Drouin scored twice to lead Canada's national junior hockey squad to a 4-1 exhibition win over Switzerland on Monday.

It was the final tune-up for Canada, which opens the world junior tournament Thursday against Germany.

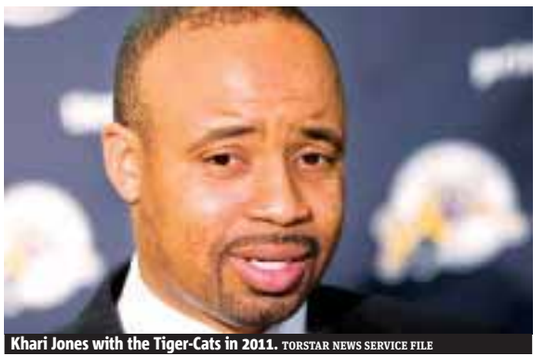
Canada finished with a 2-1 exhibition record but was coming off a 3-0 loss to Sweden on Sunday.

Bo Horvat and Connor McDavid had the other goals for Canada. Jake Paterson stopped 23 shots in goal.

Yannick Rathgeb replied for Switzerland while Melvin Nyffeler made 29 saves.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jones goes from Riderville to B.C. Lions



Khari Jones with the Tiger-Cats in 2011. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

The B.C. Lions named Khari Jones as their new offensive co-ordinator Monday.

Jones joins the Lions after two seasons as the quarterbacks coach with the Grey Cup-champion Saskatchewan Roughriders.

"Khari is a young, fresh football mind that brings a key combination of significant playing and coaching experience to the role of offensive co-ordinator," Lions head coach Mike Benevides said in a statement. "After a number of conversations with Khari over the past couple of weeks, I am very excited about his positive approach to the game, the offensive concepts he will bring to our offence and how they will translate on the field.

Prior to joining the Riders, Jones served as Hamilton's offensive co-ordinator in 2011. Jones began his CFL coaching career as the Ticats' quarterbacks coach in '09.

Jones began his CFL playing career as a quarterback with the Lions in '97 before being dealt to Winnipeg in 2000. In 2001, Jones was named the league's outstanding player after guiding the Bombers to a 14-4 regular-season record.

Jones also played for Calgary (2004) and Hamilton (2005) and twice went to training camp with Edmonton before joining CBC's CFL broadcast crew in 2006.

"It's an honour to return to the same organization that gave me an opportunity to play in this great league many years ago," said Jones.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The 2014 Chevrolet Camaro

Dream Car Put together from existing parts, it's a true hotrod Camaro built for the speed lovers

MALCOLM GUNN
wheelbasemedia.com

Satisfy your primal automotive desires in the very pacy Z/28, and all for $70K. ALL IMAGES WHEELBASE

The Z/28 omits some standard creature comforts in the interest of saving weight, such as air conditioning, which is optional.

The Z/28's engine is the 505-horsepower LS7 7.0-litre (427-cubic-inch)

You would think that the most expensive street-legal Camaro coupe ever made would at least include air conditioning, a fancy stereo, power-adjustable seats and possibly a competition-beating supercharged engine. But that's not the case with the Z/28, a designation that conjures up images of high-winding, race-bred Camaros dating back to 1967. However, you likely won't hear any price complaints from eager buyers who are expected to gobble up the first year's production run of 1,500 vehicles as fast as they depart the factory floor beginning in early 2014.

Although more than capable on the street, the "Z" was really created (or re-created, since the Z/28 label along with the previous-generation Camaro were retired after the 2002 model year) to perform in stellar fashion in competition. For drivers who would rather put in some fast laps around the racetrack than putt their way around a golf course on weekends, this is the Camaro of their dreams.

For such a low-volume model, Chevy's engineers invested considerable time and effort to ensure the Z/28 will live up to its past glory and lay a beating on high-priced competitors. Part of that process included pruning some weight, including the deletion of the power-seat adjusters, eliminating the rear-seat frame and trunk pass-through structure, installing thinner rear window glass and transferring the air conditioning unit over to the options list.

Additionally, Chevrolet has reduced the wheel diameter to 19 inches from the 20-inch units used on the Camaro SS 1LE track car and ZL1 models, thus eliminating 18.6 kilograms in unsprung weight while lowering the car's centre of gravity.

Overall, the Z/28 weighs about 135 kilograms less than the ZL1 model — the heaviest Camaro, by the way — that runs with a supercharged 6.2-litre V8 rated at 580 horsepower and 556 pound-feet of torque. The Z/28 actually weighs about the same as a base V8 Camaro.

To do this, the car instead borrows the 2013 Chevrolet Corvette Z06's high-revving 7.0-litre non-supercharged V8 engine that makes 505 horsepower and 481 pound-feet of torque. Without a supercharger, the 7.0 weighs 29 kilograms less than the 6.2 engine found in the Camaro ZL1.

As with the Z06, the Z/28 uses a dry-sump oil system (a 10-litre remote tank instead of the usual oil pan) to ensure a continuous oil stream to all vital components during high-speed manoeuvres.

As well, engine and transmission/differential oil coolers reduce heat build-up and aid reliability when these components are pushed to the max. This is also good insurance since the Z/28's powertrain warranty also covers extracurricular track use. What the Z/28 does share with its ZL1 counterpart is a close-ratio six-speed manual transmission that, like the car's extra-stiff suspension and unique shock dampers, has been beefed up for the rigours of track duty.

Numerically, the Z/28 falls short of the ZL1 in terms of raw horsepower and torque, but the Z/28 is likely much quicker around a racetrack, simply because it's built more for that purpose.

Along with its reduced heft over the ZL1, the Z/28 features plenty of race-bred tricks up its sleeves. Aerodynamic upgrades include a lower chin spoiler (called a splitter), front and rear fender flares, rocker panel moldings and a hood vent for ducting otherwise trapped air from the engine compartment. As well, an aggressively shaped rear spoiler improves high-speed stability and cornering speed, aided by a set of sticky Pirelli PZero Trofeo R-compound tires mounted to 11-inch-wide alloy wheels in front and 11.5-inchers in back. The tires — more than a foot wide — are the same on all four corners.

Chevrolet claims that the Z/28 produces 1.05 g's in cornering grip and an equal amount of braking force, thanks to the fade-free Brembo-brand carbon-ceramic brakes that weigh considerably less than comparable iron rotors.

The Z/28's interior is just as go-fast-focused as the rest of the car. There's a flat-bottomed steering wheel and Recaro racing-style seats with grippy suede-covered bottoms and cutouts for installation of an aftermarket five-point racing harness.

Clearly, this extra-special Camaro isn't your average grocery getter or stoplight poseur. It's built for drivers who can afford to drop an estimated $70,000 for a car with everything an enthusiast needs to exercise his or her need for speed.

2014 Chevrolet Camaro Z/28

- **Type.** Two-door, rear-wheel-drive coupe
- **Engines (hp).** 7.0-litre OHV V8 (505)
- **Transmissions.** Six-speed manual
- **Base price (incl. destination).** $70,000

DRIVE

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2006-2012
Kia Sedona

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
drive@metronews.ca

Kia's Sedona minivan delivered plenty of safety, convenience and affordability — as well as a high 'volume per dollar' ratio that challenged competitors like the Honda Odyssey, Nissan Quest, Toyota Sienna and the segment's sales superstar, the Dodge Grand Caravan.

Features included cruise control, steering-wheel mounted audio controls, Bluetooth and more. Projector lights and a windshield wiper defroster helped with all-season visibility. A backup camera, power sliding doors, a power tailgate and power adjustable pedals were available.

Common issues

In light of reports of alternator problems and issues with battery charging, a check of the Sedona's electrical system by a Kia-trained mechanic should be made ahead of your purchase.

The out-of-warranty cost of parts and labour to replace an alternator on a Sedona are relatively high.

Drivability issues like sporadic acceleration, hard starting, stalling, reduced power output or 'lumpy' power delivery could be the result of a bad engine sensor.

A scan of the engine control computer system can reveal any hidden sensor-related issues, even if the vehicle is running properly on your test-drive.

Hard shifting, slipping or failure to shift from the transmission may be the result of faulty sensors which control this driveline component.

If you note any strange or unwelcome behavior from the transmission during your test-drive, be sure to have it investigated before agreeing to purchase.

Note that some owners have reported oil leaks on the 2011 and newer Sedona from the oil filter housing or oil pressure switch. These are relatively easy to fix.

On the electrical front, check for proper operation of the headlights too — as numerous owners report having to change burned-out bulbs frequently.

Listen to the power windows, one at a time, to ensure they make no grinding or scraping sounds during operation. If they do, a bad window regulator is the likely culprit.

What owners like

Ride comfort, seat comfort, space, at-hand storage facilities and overall flexibility were all highly rated by Sedona owners. Performance is highly rated with either powertrain, and the second-row climate control system was a hit with parents, too.

Not so popular

Some cheap interior controls, a potentially noisy air conditioning system, easily-chipped paint and mediocre gas mileage are among the most common complaints.

Engine

A 3.8 litre V6 with 244 horsepower powered earlier models, replaced from 2011 on by a 3.5 litre V6 with 271 horsepower which offered better mileage and acceleration.

The verdict

Sedona's lower-than-average resale values, high performance and lengthy list of features will create appeal for used minivan shoppers on a budget — though a full electronics inspection and computer scan by a Kia dealer mechanic is advised.

Above, Blake as a happy 7 year-old.
Now you know where homeless adults can come from.

{ Blake, currently homeless }

HOMELESSNESS CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE. VISIT RAISINGTHEROOF.ORG TO HELP. RAISING THE ROOF

There's a lot to consider before leasing a vehicle

There are many factors to mull over when deciding if leasing a vehicle is the best option. To start with, you'll need to consider your lifestyle, as well as driving habits and financial circumstances before making any decisions.

For some initial insights, Chevrolet Canada gives us the right questions to ask alongside some valuable information:

What are the financial benefits of leasing?

Only the depreciation value of the vehicle is used to calculate monthly payments in comparison to the full price of the vehicle used in loan repayment calculations.

In addition, lease holders only pay taxes on their monthly payments and tax benefits are offered to those that are self-employed, as well as salespeople and some professionals.

How long do you intend to keep your vehicle?

Keep in mind that lease terms are shorter than most financing terms. Lease holders get to drive a new vehicle more often with lease periods typically ranging from 36 to 48 months.

What kind of vehicle would you like to drive?

Monthly payments for lease holders are typically lower than the payments of those who choose to finance. This means that drivers have the option of choosing a more luxurious vehicle for a lower monthly payment.

What is the length of my commuting time?

There will typically be a kilometre limit during the period of the lease contract. Potential lease holders should take an honest look at their driving habits and consider if the limit is realistic given their driving habits to avoid additional charges based on kilometres in excess of the limit.

Is maintenance included?

You should always speak with your local dealer about maintenance before signing your contract. Depending on the options available at your dealership, regular maintenance may be included. If maintenance isn't included, the lease holder is still expected to return a properly maintained vehicle at the end of the contract period.

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The kids have spoken, Comet and Blitzen rule

Maritz Research survey. 1.2 billion children vote two reindeer best to lead Santa's sleigh this Xmas

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

According to a survey that compiled the feedback of 1.2 billion children worldwide, Blitzen and Comet are equally qualified to lead Santa's sleigh on Christmas Eve.

The survey was conducted last year by Maritz Research.

Canadian-based Chris Travel, is the company's vice-president of strategic consulting for the firm's automotive sector practice, and routinely sends us lots of good information about the Canadian automotive scene through the company's many automotive-based consumer surveys and focus groups.

I always look forward to the accurate and timely studies Maritz provides, but I have to admit this one, which Maritz is calling the Reindeer Customer Satisfaction and Santa Support Survey, sounds a bit bogus.

How can you even contact 1.2 billion children worldwide without hearing about it on the major news organizations, like TMZ Live or eTalk Daily hosted by Ben Mulroney and Tanya Kim?

But we will give Maritz the benefit of doubt today because it's super timely with Christmas coming tomorrow, and I don't have time to dig deeper into the methodology (the malls close early today).

Before getting into the meat of the survey, Travel did have to clarify a couple of items … "We did not include Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, because of course Rudolph did not come along until 1939 when he was created by Robert L. May for the Montgomery Ward Catalogue.

"Nor did we include Chet the crazy reindeer from the 2002 Santa Clause II movie with Tim Allen … Chet was so far out there it would have skewed our data."

So the kids were asked to comment only on the original eight reindeer, and give their personal opinion on how each would measure up for Santa on three important criteria.

On the first measure — reliability and dependability — Comet led all contenders with a 37 per cent approval score.

Maritz's automotive surveys usually ask about interior comfort, but for this study they substituted exterior comfort. Blitzen was top reindeer in this category.

Fun to drive is a very important criteria, noted Travel, "because that's the kind of guy that Santa is…" Comet topped the charts here, with a whopping 67 per cent score.

For the last criteria, fit and finish, Blitzen scored another overall win.

Frankly, I was surprised Vixen didn't do better in this category.

But when Maritz tallied everything, to come up with an overall winner, Blitzen and Comet were tied!

What to do?

"Because of this unprecedented situation, where we had two reindeer so evenly matched, we had to go to an independent panel of experts," said Travel, holding up a cast picture of the animated characters in the 1965 movie, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer — you know, the one with Hermey, the dentist wannabe elf, and that weird abominable snowman known as The Bumble. (Are we to believe this is an actual panel of experts? My bogus meter is going on overdrive, but press on we must…)

"Based on their extensive deliberations, they decided, after many hours, that Blitzen is the reindeer, to lead Santa's sleigh," noted Travel.

He then thanked the "1.2 billion children who participated in our survey" and wished everyone the very best for the holiday season. I'll do the same.

The breakdown

- **Reindeer Customer Satisfaction Survey**

- **The categories:**
1) Reliability & Dependability
2) Fit & Finish
3) Exterior Comfort
4) Fun to Drive

- **Blitzen: 1)** 25.5% … **2)** 37.0% … **3)** 67.5% … **4)** 20.5%
- **Comet:** … 37% … 25.5% … 20.5% … 67.5%
- **Prancer:** … 17.5% … 5.0% … 0.5% … 5.5%
- **Donner:** … 6.0% … 4.0% … 5.5% … 1.5%
- **Dasher:** … 4.5% … 2.5% … 0.5% … 1.5%
- **Cupid:** … 4.0% …12.0% … 0.5% … 1.0%
- **Dancer:** … 3.5% … 5.5% … 3.0% … 1.5%
- **Vixen:** 2.0% … 7.5% … 1.5% … 1.5%

SOURCE: AUTOMOTIVE PRACTICE OF MARITZ RESEARCH; 1.2 BILLION SAMPLE SURVEY. RUDOLF AND CHET NOT PART OF SURVEY, DUE TO OVER-EXPOSURE, WHICH CAN SERIOUSLY SKEW DATA.

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Down payment on purchase financing offers may be required based on approved credit from Ford Credit. ‡ Offer valid until January 2, 2014 (the "Offer Period") to Canadian residents towards the purchase or lease of most new 2013/2014 Ford models (excluding Focus, Fiesta, C-MAX, Mustang Shelby and BOSS 302, Transit Connect Electric, and F-150 Raptor) (each an "Eligible Vehicle"). Only one (1) bonus offer may be applied towards the purchase or lease of one (1) Eligible Vehicle. Taxes payable before offer amount is deducted. *Purchase a new 2013 Ford F-150 Super Cab XLT 4x4 5.0L) for $26,999 (after Total Manufacturer Rebate of $10,250) deducted). Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price after total manufacturer rebate has been deducted. Offer excludes freight and air tax ($1,700) license, fuel fill charge, insurance, dealer PDI, registration, PPSA, administration fees, any environmental charges or fees, and all applicable taxes. All prices are based on Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. **Until January 31, 2014, receive (4.49%) / (2.49%/1.99%) APR purchase financing on new 2013 (F-150 Super Cab XLT 4x4 5.0L / F-150 Super Crew XLT 4x4 5.0L) / 2014 (Fusion S/ Escape S) models for up to (72)/(84) months to qualified customers, on approved credit (OAC) from Ford Credit. Not all buyers will qualify for the lowest interest rate. Get the above for ($26,999/$29,349) / ($22,499/$22,999) purchase financed at (4.49%) / (2.49%/1.99%) APR for (72)/(84) months, with ($0)/($0) down payment, monthly payment is ($428/$412)/($282/$296) other delivery allowance of ($9,250) / ($0/$750), (the sum of twelve (12) monthly payments divided by (24 periods) gives payee a bi-weekly payment of ($198/$238) / ($359/$315), interest cost of borrowing is ($3,888/$4,259)/($2,819/$3,591) or APR of (4.49%/4.49%)/ (2.49%/1.99%) and total to be repaid is ($30,888/$34,008) / ($24,530/$26,590). 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Limit one (1) offer per each Eligible Vehicle purchase or lease, up to a maximum of two (2) separate Eligible Vehicle sales per Costco Membership Number. Offer is transferable to persons domiciled with an eligible Costco member. Applicable taxes calculated before CAD$1,000 offer is deducted. †† Claim based on analysis by Ford of Polk global new registrations for CY2012 for a single-nameplate which excludes rebadged vehicles, platform derivatives or other vehicle nameplate versions. ◊ Based on R. L. Polk Canada, Inc. Total New Registration data for Full Size Pickups per Ford Segmentation as of YTD September 30, 2013. ^^Estimated fuel consumption ratings for the 2013 (F-150 4X4 5.0L V8 6-Speed Auto) / 2014 (Focus 5 2.0L I4 6-Speed Auto/Fusion SE 2.5L - I4/Escape S FWD 1.6L GTDI-I4). Fuel consumption ratings based on Natural Canada-approved test methods. Actual fuel consumption will vary based on road conditions, vehicle loading and driving habits. ® Registered trademark of Prize Costco International, Inc. used under license. ©2013 Sirius Canada Inc. "SiriusXM", the SiriusXM logo, channel names and logos are trademarks of SiriusXM Radio Inc. and are used under license. ©2013 Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited. All rights reserved.

ISTOCK

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Something you have been working on for a long time will bear fruit today. Others may say you've been lucky but the fact is you have laboured long and hard to get this far.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You will handle everything life throws at you with grace and style. The planets endow you with limitless self-confidence and the kind of faith that moves mountains.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You will have to take on new responsibilities over the next few days, including some of a financial nature. Show the world you have what it takes to handle difficult situations.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Although the sun in Capricorn brings partnership problems to the fore, Mercury in your opposite sign will make it easier for you to see things from the other person's point of view.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Matters of a routine nature will take up a lot of time but once you have completed your tasks you can move on to something more interesting. Whatever else you do today, don't cut corners.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
This should be a productive day for you — you will get a lot done in a short space of time. Make the most of it because as you move into the New Year not everything will come quite so easily.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Partners and colleagues will demand more of your time and attention today and if you are smart you will give it to them.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You will get the chance to move up in the world in some way over the next few days and even though your mind may be on other things you must grab the opportunity.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Money matters must come first today and with Mercury joining the sun in the main financial area of your chart you will get the chance to balance the books.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Decide what is the most important thing you should be doing right now and do it to the exclusion of all else. Your efforts will not be wasted.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
What happens today will convince you that life is good and about to get even better. The only reason that your thoughts have been so negative of late is because you have allowed your emotions to blot out common sense. Time to rebalance.

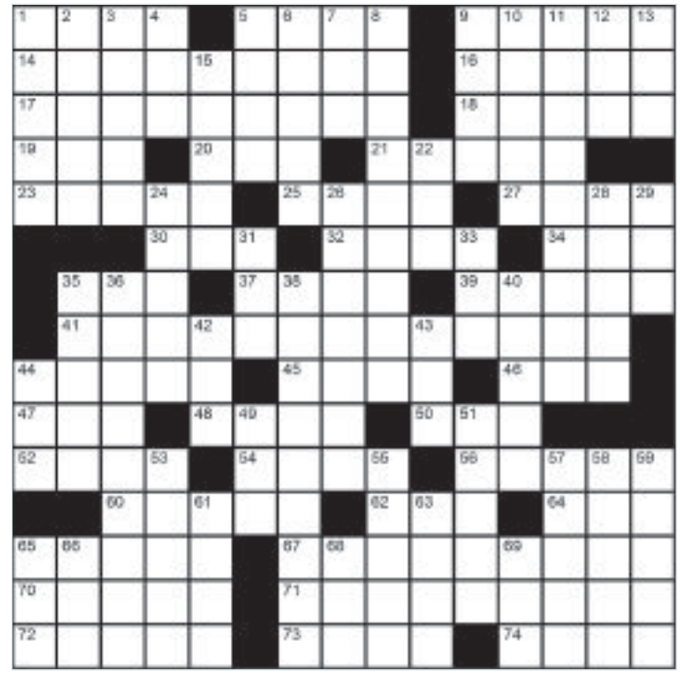
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Try not to get too emotionally involved in other people's problems. Life is full of ups and downs, and so a more light-hearted approach from you today will be an example for them to follow.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



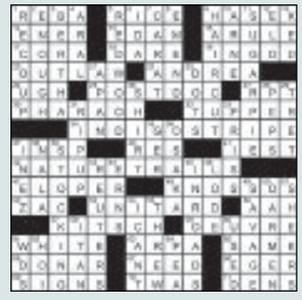
Across

1. "Hush! I __ __ the phone!"
5. Gentle
9. "__ Old St. Nicholas"
14. Artist's work
16. Grow like _ __
17. Saint-Jean-sur-__, Quebec
18. Distributes
19. Pitcher's stat.
20. _ __ mode
21. Pancake dish of Russia
23. Mailing enclosures, commonly
25. Nero's 651
27. Poinsettia part
30. Texter's "incidentally"
32. Jump
34. __-Cone
35. Overseas MTV honour (acronym)
37. Alum
39. Barbera's cartooning partner
41. The Huron Carol bit: "That mighty __ __ / Sent angel choirs instead."
44. Via ship: 2 wds.
45. Singer/songwriter Marvin
46. Prefix to "light"
47. Appropriate
48. Thailand currency
50. Premium car
52. French for "here and there": Ici __ __
54. Ancient portico
56. Distressed cries
60. Saskatchewan village between Regina and Saskatoon
62. American airer since '71
64. Furrow-maker
65. Helicopter part
67. Ontario community east of London
70. Satire
71. Where Canada is trying to lay territorial claim, as in recent headlines: 2 wds.
72. Holiday hue
73. Fellows
74. Belonging to an undercover agent

Down

1. __-ski
2. Ballerina/actress Ms. Shearer of The Red Shoes (1948)
3. Killer whales
4. To the __ power
5. Richard of Night Court
6. Ancient tale
7. Prevarication
8. __ Canada (Book publisher)
9. Actress Ms. Gertz
10. Buck of Hee Haw
11. "Oh, the weather outside is frightful..." Christmas carol: 3 wds.
12. Jeans brand
13. Li'l length units
15. Spread
22. Irish coronation stone, __ Fail
24. Online retail discount
26. Mott's beverage
28. Boredom
29. Bygone bird
31. Early 1920s President [monogram]
33. __ Beta Kappa
35. The Prince of __ (1998)
36. Festive foliage
38. Position in hockey: 2 wds.
40. When management might return from lunch, __ __
42. Music legend Mr. Calloway
43. Bird bill
44. UK defence contractor, _ _ _ Systems
49. Mount __ (Volcano of Japan)
51. Frankincense and __
53. Solo
55. Furious
57. __ it up (Celebrate)
58. Candy-on-a-stick
59. Monica of tennis
61. Welsh opera singer Mr. Terfel
63. Furry friends
65. Semi
66. Hockey Hall of Famer
68. __ _ Turn (Road sign)
69. Madonna's first hubby ... his initials-sharers

Yesterday's Crossword



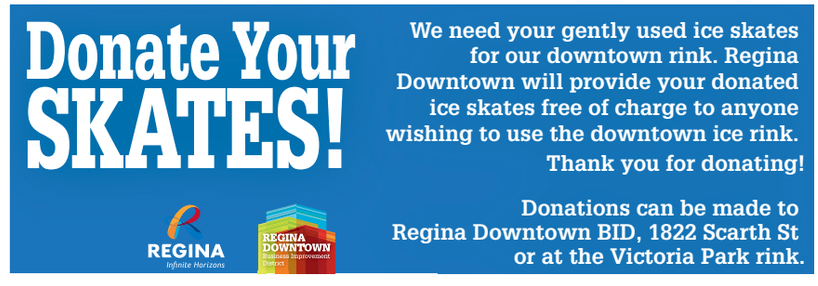
Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	9		7	8				
	2		5				1	9
		4	2			3		
						9	4	8
6				4				3
4	3	2						
		8			9	6		
7	1				5		9	
				1	3		5	

Yesterday's Sudoku

5	1	2	3	4	8	6	9	7
8	7	4	2	6	9	5	1	3
9	3	6	5	1	7	8	4	2
1	6	7	4	2	5	3	8	9
2	5	8	9	7	3	1	6	4
3	4	9	1	8	6	7	2	5
4	8	5	6	3	2	9	7	1
7	9	1	8	5	4	2	3	6
6	2	3	7	9	1	4	5	8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